



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Commission on Disabilities Meeting

REMOTE MEETING:

Google Meet: (US) +1 314-666-1511 PIN: 399 017 983#

Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building

100 Maple Avenue

Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

May 9, 2023

To: Commission on Disabilities

1. Call to order 7:01
 - a. New Member: Susanna Meyer introduced self. 30 years in Shrewsbury. She is an audiologist and professor emeritus at Worcester State University in the Department of Communications Sciences and Disorders. Her children went through Shrewsbury Schools. She is a polio survivor.
 - b. Members present: Charbel Sakr-No, Diane Tonelli- Yes, Diane Burns no, Leonora Ryan, (on phone) yes, Deb DelDotto- Yes, Ashley Falandys- Yes, Susanna Meyer -yes.
 - c. Town Staff Member- Justin Dobson.
2. Approve meeting minutes from March 13, 2023. The Motion to accept the was stated by Ashley Falandys and seconded by Diane Tonelli.
 - a. All approved, Diane Tonelli. Yes, Leonora Ryan- yes, Deb DelDotto- Yes, Susanna Meyer- Yes
3. Appointments/Meetings
 - a. Handicap Parking Fund: Select Board approved \$200 to fund and \$100 to town fines. General Law states that fund can only be spent by Commission on Disabilities (CoD)with final approval by Town Selectman.
 - i. CoD will now need to decide how to move forward to use the funds.
 - ii. Ideas:
 1. Town entities can reach out to CoD for a grant to support accessibility.
 2. CoD can decide to use the funds in areas of concern and/or that it has determined needs focus and funding.
 - iii. Diane brought discussion that both these areas are of interest. We can look at strategic plan and the grant process.
 - iv. Debbie D. stated there are some ideas on how the library could use funding.
 - v. Ashley presented that Police Dept has a sensory truck run by a key person who may be interested in asking for funding.
 - b. Uber Funds- no update.
4. New Business
 - a. Diane presented a summary of her meeting with Assistant COA Director regarding Town of Shrewsbury Aging and Dementia Friendly status. She and the assistant

Director planned for reaching out to town municipalities and Senior Center members to do Dementia Friend Instructional

- i. Since this assistant Director has resigned. This is tabled until a new assistant director is appointed.
- b. Remote meetings M.G.L Chap 30A, Sect 20(e)- allows CoD to hold meetings with Chair physically at meeting location and remote attendees per disability needs and barriers- to allow access.
 - i. Discussion- allowing access to be remote is a benefit for the attendees. The intent is to attend in person but remote allows access for all.
 - ii. Diane made a motion to extend this for one year, seconded by Susanna. All in favor: Diane- Yes, Susanna- yes, Deb- yes, Ashley- yes, Lee- Yes.
 - iii. We will extend this until May 2024 and revisit.

5. Old Business

- a. Ashley presented her idea for a Library event for children with disabilities. Her goal is to set up an event for March 2024. Her outline:
 - i. Part one: before event “Raising Kids, who include” webinar for part of the event. CPAC has funds who could support if they partner with CoD group.
 - ii. Part two: Day of Event: Having presenter ‘Understanding Our Differences’ would be great. They set up centers for children- disability related kids activities. They also have authors present.
 1. Ashley also noted that there is an author in Shrewsbury.
 - iii. Additionally:
 1. The library could be set up with rotating information.
 2. The Town Diversity Inclusion Board could be invited, have a table.
 - iv. Discussion: A local Deaf adaptation expert is interested in joining. We could reach out to local themed vendors/establishments to see if they’d like to be included. Discussion- is to keep Special Education Director in town updated and informed.
 - v. Next steps: meet with library, contact the Parent groups et al and see what they would be interested in doing.
- b. Library Braille books subcommittee-

Review of status: Town of Shrewsbury has 4-5 books that are braille at the library. There are also books ‘about’ braille there. Other libraries in area noted- some have a couple- most have none. The library director states that they refer inquiries to outside sources. Mass Commission for the Blind (MCB) was contacted, and they stated that very few clients use braille, or not start with braille. Given the various levels of usable vision- the MCB agent suggested that the library get two software packages – JAWS and Zoomtex. He suggested that a client that requests braille could be directed to laptop and give them information about National Braille Press and The Talking Book to get braille books.
- c. Follow up from WRTA/Shrewsbury Senior Center presentation. Tabled until next meeting.
- d. The Community Preservation Committee would like to come and present to us regarding their agenda.
- e. Shrewsbury Feasibility Planning follow-up: Grants were not appointed to Shrewsbury, but priorities are still a focus under capital improvements. The next grant cycle is late August. We can review at July meeting and if we have any concerns, we ask town to complete a grant application.

6. Other Business: Affordable Housing Trust is doing a presentation on June 14th at the Shrewsbury Senior Center.
7. Town Applications
 - a. Two licensing authority memos were sent out regarding applications to town for new businesses. They were:
 - i. NOLA Cajan Kitchen 378 Maple Ave- new rebuild location. No discussion.
 - ii. Errol Ray Bistro 6 Hartford Tpk. – small older building- no discussion.
8. A Motion to adjourn at 8: was made by Diane Tonelli, seconded Susanna Meyer.
 - a. Members: Diane Tonelli-Yes, Leonora Ryan- yes, Deb DelDotto- Yes, Ashley Falandys- Yes, Susanna Meyer- yes.

Next meeting scheduled for July 11th or earlier if necessary.
Respectfully submitted,

Diane C Tonelli